

the interests of our Nation's military, and the men and women who wear the uniform of the United States. He has been a particularly strong advocate for the Navy and for our commercial maritime interests.

OWEN is also uncompromising in his insistence that government be fiscally disciplined, a trait which he probably acquired during his long service in the Virginia House of Delegates. The fact that he is retiring at a time of record surpluses is somehow fitting. It certainly wasn't that way when he came to the House in 1987.

Mr. Speaker, all of us in the House will certainly miss the service and dedication of OWEN PICKETT. I commend the leadership for bringing this bill to the floor in such an expeditious manner.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATourette) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5284.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on S. 1794, H.R. 5267 and H.R. 5284, the bills just considered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

□ 1445

PRIVACY COMMISSION ACT

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4049) to establish the Commission for the Comprehensive Study of Privacy Protection, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 4049

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Privacy Commission Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds the following:

(1) Americans are increasingly concerned about their civil liberties and the security and use of their personal information, including medical records, educational records, library records, magazine subscription records, records of purchases of goods and other payments, and driver's license numbers.

(2) Commercial entities are increasingly aware that consumers expect them to adopt

privacy policies and take all appropriate steps to protect the personal information of consumers.

(3) There is a growing concern about the confidentiality of medical records, because there are inadequate Federal guidelines and a patchwork of confusing State and local rules regarding privacy protection for individually identifiable patient information.

(4) In light of recent changes in financial services laws allowing for increased sharing of information between traditional financial institutions and insurance entities, a coordinated and comprehensive review is necessary regarding the protections of personal data compiled by the health care, insurance, and financial services industries.

(5) The use of Social Security numbers has expanded beyond the uses originally intended.

(6) Use of the Internet has increased at astounding rates, with approximately 5 million current Internet sites and 64 million regular Internet users each month in the United States alone.

(7) Financial transactions over the Internet have increased at an astounding rate, with 17 million American households spending \$20 billion shopping on the Internet last year.

(8) Use of the Internet as a medium for commercial activities will continue to grow, and it is estimated that by the end of 2000, 56 percent of the companies in the United States will sell their products on the Internet.

(9) There have been reports of surreptitious collection of consumer data by Internet marketers and questionable distribution of personal information by on-line companies.

(10) In 1999, the Federal Trade Commission found that 87 percent of Internet sites provided some form of privacy notice, which represented an increase from 15 percent in 1998.

(11) The United States is the leading economic and social force in the global information economy, largely because of a favorable regulatory climate and the free flow of information. It is important for the United States to continue that leadership. As nations and governing bodies around the world begin to establish privacy standards, these standards will directly affect the United States.

(12) The shift from an industry-focused economy to an information-focused economy calls for a reassessment of the most effective way to balance personal privacy and information use, keeping in mind the potential for unintended effects on technology development, innovation, the marketplace, and privacy needs.

(13) This Act shall not be construed to prohibit the enactment of legislation on privacy issues by the Congress during the existence of the Commission. It is the responsibility of the Congress to act to protect the privacy of individuals, including individuals' medical and financial information. Various committees of the Congress are currently reviewing legislation in the area of medical and financial privacy. Further study by the Commission established by this Act should not be considered a prerequisite for further consideration or enactment of financial or medical privacy legislation by the Congress.

SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT.

There is established a commission to be known as the "Commission for the Comprehensive Study of Privacy Protection" (in this Act referred to as the "Commission").

SEC. 4. DUTIES OF COMMISSION.

(a) STUDY.—The Commission shall conduct a study of issues relating to protection of individual privacy and the appropriate balance to be achieved between protecting individual privacy and allowing appropriate uses of information, including the following:

(1) The monitoring, collection, and distribution of personal information by Federal, State, and local governments, including personal information collected for a decennial census, and such personal information as a driver's license number.

(2) Current efforts to address the monitoring, collection, and distribution of personal information by Federal and State governments, individuals, or entities, including—

(A) existing statutes and regulations relating to the protection of individual privacy, such as section 552a of title 5, United States Code (commonly referred to as the Privacy Act of 1974) and section 552 of title 5, United States Code (commonly referred to as the Freedom of Information Act);

(B) legislation pending before the Congress;

(C) privacy protection efforts undertaken by the Federal Government, State governments, foreign governments, and international governing bodies;

(D) privacy protection efforts undertaken by the private sector; and

(E) self-regulatory efforts initiated by the private sector to respond to privacy issues.

(3) The monitoring, collection, and distribution of personal information by individuals or entities, including access to and use of medical records, financial records (including credit cards, automated teller machine cards, bank accounts, and Internet transactions), personal information provided to on-line sites accessible through the Internet, Social Security numbers, insurance records, education records, and driver's license numbers.

(4) Employer practices and policies with respect to the financial and health information of employees, including—

(A) whether employers use or disclose employee financial or health information for marketing, employment, or insurance underwriting purposes;

(B) what restrictions employers place on disclosure or use of employee financial or health information;

(C) employee rights to access, copy, and amend their own health records and financial information;

(D) what type of notice employers provide to employees regarding employer practices with respect to employee financial and health information; and

(E) practices of employer medical departments with respect to disclosing employee health information to administrative or other personnel of the employer.

(5) The extent to which individuals in the United States can obtain redress for privacy violations.

(6) The extent to which older individuals and disabled individuals are subject to exploitation involving the disclosure or use of their financial information.

(b) FIELD HEARINGS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall conduct at least 2 field hearings in each of the 5 geographical regions of the United States.

(2) BOUNDARIES.—For purposes of this subsection, the Commission may determine the boundaries of the five geographical regions of the United States.

(c) REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after appointment of all members of the Commission—

(A) a majority of the members of the Commission shall approve a report; and

(B) the Commission shall submit the approved report to the Congress and the President.

(2) CONTENTS.—The report shall include a detailed statement of findings, conclusions,